



Private Fostering

Can you help us spot an invisible child?

According to research by the British Association for Adoption & Fostering (BAAF), one in 10 children are being looked after by someone other than a parent or close relative, yet only a fraction of this number is registered with local authorities. Making it too easy for them to be neglected, forgotten or overlooked.

Once we know where a child is living, we know how to help.





Somebody else's child. Everyone's responsibility.

Whether you're looking after somebody else's child, your own child is living with another family, or you know of a child being cared for by someone who isn't a relative, we need to be told. When we're kept in the picture, we can offer advice, support and protection.

Firstly, what do we mean by Private Fostering?

By definition, Private Fostering is when a child under the age of 16 – or 18 if the child has a disability – lives with someone who isn't a close relative for 28 days or more. Examples of Private Fostering include:

- A child living with a friend's family
- A child from overseas staying with a host family while they attend a language school
- A child living with a member of their extended family such as a cousin or great aunt
- A child staying with another family because their parent works long or unsociable hours
- A child who was adopted in another country, where the adoption is not legally recognised in the UK
- A child who has parents that work away, or in the armed forces, for periods of time

When is it not Private Fostering:

- When a child is living with a close relative such as their grandparents, aunt, uncle, brother, sister or step-parents
- When a child is placed with a local authority or agency foster carer by a Social Worker




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Always keep us in the picture



If you're involved in organising a Private Fostering arrangement in Norfolk. You must, by law, inform Norfolk County Council twelve weeks before the arrangement begins. If professionals such as teachers and doctors become aware that a child is being privately fostered, they should always make sure that Norfolk County Council has prior knowledge of the arrangement.

When we know where a child is. We can help

The Children Act 1989, states that Norfolk County Council must ensure that all privately fostered children are safe and supported.

We couldn't be happier to comply, and we pride ourselves on working closely with the Private Foster Carer to help keep children healthy, happy and free from harm. It's why we:

- Regularly visit the child and Private Foster Carer
- Assess the suitability of the arrangement
- Offer advice and guidance to the child, their parents, and the Private Foster Carer
- Advice to the carer

Is there any financial support available?

Although no financial support is available from Norfolk County Council, arrangements may be made between the Private Foster Carer and the child's parents.

If eligible, the Private Foster Carer can also claim child benefit and child tax credit. If the placement is suitable the Private Foster Carer does not gain parental responsibility.



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How to get in touch

To let us know about any Private Fostering arrangement, or to find out whether Private Fostering applies to your particular arrangement, please call **0344 800 8020** or pop along to **www.norfolk.gov.uk/privatefostering**.



If you need this document in large print, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact Norfolk County Council on **0344 800 8020** and we'll do all we can to help.





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www.norfolk.gov.uk/privatefostering



Norfolk County Council



Norfolk Safeguarding
Children Board